CLAIMS

1   1. A method of building a database in an exchange system to enable the lo-

2   cation of distributed health care information, the method comprising the steps of:

3   receiving metadata including organization information, patient demo-

4   graphic data, and information locator data;

5   determining a universal person object corresponding to the demo-

6   graphic data;

7   updating the universal person object in accordance with the metadata;

8   and

9   storing the information locator data so that the information locator data

10   is associated with the universal person object.

1   2. The method of claim 1 wherein the determining step further comprises the

2   steps of:

3   searching the database for an existing universal person object corre-

4   sponding to the patient demographic data and determining that there is no

5   existing universal person object corresponding to the patient demographic

6   data; and

7   creating the universal person object corresponding to the patient demo-

8   graphic data.

1   3. The method of claim 1 wherein the determining step further comprises the

2   step of searching the database and locating the universal person object correspond-

3   ing to the patient demographic data.

1   4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of, after the updating

2   step, forwarding the universal person object to a parent server.

1   5. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of, after the updating

2   step, forwarding the universal person object to a parent server.

1   6. The method of claim 3 further comprising the step of, after the updating

2   step, forwarding the universal person object to a parent server.

1   7. A method of locating particular information pertaining to a person wherein

2   the particular information is stored among distributed information, the method com-

3   prising the steps of:

4   receiving a query from a provider;

5   correlating the query against at least a primary database in at least a

6   primary domain to locate a universal person object corresponding to the per-

7   son;

8   retrieving locator data associated with the universal person object;

9   filtering the locator data according to one or more policies; and

10   presenting the locator data to the provider.

1   8. The method of claim 7 further comprising the steps of:

2   determining if a pointer exists in the primary database, the pointer indi-

3   cating a remote database in a remote domain; and

4   if the pointer exists, correlating the query against the remote database

5   in the remote domain.

1   9. The method of claim 7 further comprising the steps of:

2   presenting correlation results to the provider; and

3   receiving constraints and parameters from the provider, the constraints

4   and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   10. The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps of:

2   presenting correlation results to the provider; and

3   receiving constraints and parameters from the provider, the constraints

4   and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   11. In a network including distributed information, a method of viewing a rec-

2   ord for a particular person from within the information, the method comprising the

3   steps of:

4   sending a query from a provider application to a primary domain server;

5   correlating the query by accessing at least a primary database in at

6   least a primary domain to locate a universal person object corresponding to

7   the particular person;

8   retrieving locator data associated with the universal person object;

9   filtering the locator data according to one or more policies;

10   presenting the locator data to the provider application;

11   selecting, at the provider application, one or more records from a re-

12   mote data system; and

13   accessing the one or more records from the remote data system by the

14   provider application.

1   12. The method of claim 11 further comprising the steps of:

2   determining if a pointer exists in the primary database, the pointer indi-

3   cating a remote database in a remote domain; and

4   if the pointer exists, correlating the query by accessing the remote da-

5   tabase in the remote domain.

1   13. The method of claim 11 further comprising the steps of:

2   presenting correlation results to the provider application; and

3   setting constraints and parameters at the provider application, the con-

4   straints and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   14. The method of claim 12 further comprising the steps of:

2   presenting correlation results to the provider application; and

3   setting constraints and parameters at the provider application, the con-

4   straints and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   15. A computer program product for enabling a server to build a database in

2   an exchange system to enable the location of distributed information, the computer

3   program product including a computer program comprising:

4   instructions for creating universal person objects;

5   instructions for receiving metadata including organization information,

6   demographic data, and information locator data;

7   instructions for searching the database for universal person objects;

8   instructions for updating a universal person object corresponding to the

9   demographic data in accordance with the metadata; and

10   instructions for storing the information locator data so that the informa-

11   tion locator data is associated with the universal person object corresponding

12   to the demographic data.

1   16. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein the computer program

2   further comprises instructions for forwarding the universal person objects to a parent

3   server.

1   17. A computer program product for enabling the locating particular informa-

2   tion pertaining to a person wherein the particular information is stored among distrib-

3   uted information, the computer program product including a computer program

4   comprising:

5   instructions for receiving a query from a provider;

6   instructions for correlating the query against at least a primary database

7   at least a primary domain to locate a universal person object corresponding to

8   the person;

9   instructions for retrieving locator data associated with the universal per-

10   son object;

11   instructions for filtering the locator data according to one or more poli-

12   cies; and

13   instructions for presenting the locator data to the provider.

1   18. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein the computer program

2   further comprises:

3   instructions for determining if a pointer exists in the primary database,

4   the pointer indicating a remote database in a remote domain; and

5   instructions for correlating the query against the remote database in the

6   remote domain.

1   19. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein the computer program

2   further comprises:

3   instructions for presenting correlation results to the provider; and

4   instructions for receiving constraints and parameters from the provider,

5   the constraints and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   20. The computer program product of claim 18 wherein the computer program

2   further comprises:

3   instructions for presenting correlation results to the provider; and

-60-

4   instructions for receiving constraints and parameters from the provider,

5   the constraints and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   21. Apparatus for building a database to enable the location of distributed in-

2   formation, the apparatus comprising:

3   means for creating universal person objects;

4   means for receiving metadata including organization information,

5   demographic data, and information locator data;

6   means for searching the database for universal person objects;

7   means for updating a universal person object corresponding to the

8   demographic data in accordance with the metadata; and

9   means for storing the information locator data so that the information

10   locator data is associated with the universal person object corresponding to

11   the demographic data.

1   22. Apparatus for locating particular information pertaining to a person

2   wherein the particular information is stored among distributed information, the appa-

3   ratus comprising:

4   means for receiving a query from a provider;

5   means for correlating the query against at least a primary database at

6   least a primary domain to locate a universal person object corresponding to

7   the person;

8   means for retrieving locator data associated with the universal person

9   object;

10   means for filtering the locator data according to one or more policies;

11   and

12   means for presenting the locator data to the provider.

1   23. A network including distributed health care information comprising:

2   a provider application operable to issue queries; and

3   at least a first server connected to the provider application, and con-

4   taining a primary correlation system connected to a primary database of uni-

5   versal person objects, the server operable to receive the queries, correlate the

6   queries against the database, and retrieve locator data, the locator data indi-

7   cating the location of one or more specific records from within the distributed

8   provider information.

1   24. The network of claim 23 further comprising a second server connected to

2   the first server, and including a remote correlation system connected to a remote

3   database of universal person objects.

1   25. The network of claim 23 further comprising a remote data system con-

2   taining at least a portion of the distributed health care information, the remote data

3   system operable to connect to the provider application, format, and supply one or

4   more of the specific records over the network.

1   26. The network of claim 24 further comprising a remote data system con-

2   taining at least a portion of the distributed health care information, the remote data

3   system operable to connect to the provider application, format, and supply one or

4   more of the specific records over the network.

1   27. A programmed computer system operable to build a database in an ex-

2   change system to enable the location of distributed health care information by per-

3   forming the steps of:

4   receiving metadata including organization information, demographic

5   data, and information locator data;

6   determining a universal person object corresponding to the demo-

7   graphic data;

8   updating the universal person object in accordance with the metadata;

9   and

10   storing the information locator data so that the information locator data

11   is associated with the universal person object.

1   28. The system of claim 27 wherein the determining step further comprises

2   the steps of:

3   searching the database for an existing universal person object corre-

4   sponding to the demographic data and determining that there is no existing

5   universal person object corresponding to the demographic data; and

6   creating the universal person object corresponding to the demographic

7   data.

1   29. The system of claim 27 wherein the determining step further comprises

2   the step of searching the database and locating the universal person object corre-

3   sponding to the demographic data.

1   30. The system of claim 27 further enabled to perform the step of forwarding

2   the universal person object to a parent server.

1   31. The system of claim 28 further enabled to perform the step of forwarding

2   the universal person object to a parent server.

1   32. The system of claim 29 further enabled to perform the step of forwarding

2   the universal person object to a parent server.

1   33. A programmed computer system which is operable to locate particular

2   health care information pertaining to a person wherein the particular health care in-

3   formation is stored among distributed provider's by performing the steps of:

4   receiving a query from a provider;

5   correlating the query against at least a primary database at least a pri-

6   mary domain to locate a universal person object corresponding to the person;

7   retrieving locator data associated with the universal person object;

8   filtering the locator data according to one or more policies; and

9   presenting the locator data to the provider.

1   34. The system of claim 33 further enabled to perform the steps of:

2   determining if a pointer exists in the primary database, the pointer indi-

3   cating a remote database in a remote domain; and

4   if the pointer exists, correlating the query against the remote database

5   in the remote domain.

1   35. The system of claim 33 further enabled to perform the steps of:

2   presenting correlation results to the provider; and

3   receiving constraints and parameters from the provider, the constraints

4   and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   36. The system of claim 34 further enabled to perform the steps of:

2   presenting correlation results to the provider; and

3   receiving constraints and parameters from the provider, the constraints

4   and parameters for directing the retrieving of the locator data.

1   37. Apparatus for enabling the location of records from among distributed in-

2   formation, the apparatus comprising:

3   an information locator service for storing and accessing information lo-

4   cator data;

5   a database of universal person objects, each universal person object

6   corresponding to a person and associated with information locator data in the

7   information locator service; and

-66-

8   a correlation system connected to the database for correlating demo-

9   graphic information against the database to locate a particular universal per-

10   son object.

1   38. The apparatus of claim 37 further comprising a person identification serv-

2   ice connected to the correlation system for providing a standard interface for receiv-

3   ing the demographic information.

1   39. The apparatus of claim 37 further comprising a resource access descrip-

2   tion service for maintaining and applying policy information to information locator

3   data.

1   40. The apparatus of claim 38 further comprising a resource access descrip-

2   tion service for maintaining and applying policy information to information locator

3   data.

1   41. A memory system encoded with a data structure for defining a universal

2   person object for use in correlating queries for records, the data structure comprising:

3   a person class including references to person specific data, the person

4   class further being operable to track historical instances of the person specific

5   data;

6   a person identifier class associated the person class, the person identi-

7   fier class including references to one or more person identifiers; and

8   a domain identifier class associated with the person class for identifying

9   one or more systems from which the one or more person identifiers have been

10   received.